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The STEP LADDER

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE BOOKFELLOWS

WINTER 1956-57

VOLUME 40 NO. 3

THE ORDER OF BOOKFELLOWS

An International Association of Readers and Writers

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Cover design—zinc plate from an etching by Gretschen Meyer, Knox '57.

The Step Ladder is published quarterly by The Order of Bookfellows. Price $2 per year. Contributions are welcomed. Benjamin B. Richards, Editor. Offices: The Library, Knox College, Galesburg, Illinois.

The
STEP LADDER

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. . . We are all, of course, heavily over-exposed to conflicting stimulation from radio and TV, newspapers, journals, and conferences. To achieve simplification of the inner picture one has to look at the outer picture selectively. One has to be deliberately and happily lopsided. Better a little incomplete truth than a large and complete muddle. This is not a complete solution but it is the only answer at the level of the individual.

G. PATRICK MEREDITH, in "Thoughts on Communication"
Journal of Documentation, September 1956.

VOL. 40, No. 3 WINTER 1956-57 GALESBURG, ILLINOIS

Bayka Russell
830 Park Avenue
New York 21, New York

AFTER PERILOUS SEAS

Who remembers those golden days of Greece,
garlands on altars, sinuous dancing girls,
and how dark rowers brought that great barge home?

Down from the ship mighty Ulysses came,
weary of his illusive voyagings,
weary of brackish water in his mouth.

How soon would he go venturing again,
who for this one hour hated the vast sea,
the steersman's angry curse, the straining hull?

Here on this leeward island there was peace,
a momentary shelter from wild gales,
and once again Penelope's soft lips.

Who knows what harbours might await him still,
and how some restless morning he would rise,
turn to the shore and hunger for the sea?

Kitty Parsons
Rockport, Massachusetts

WINTER

Autumn has disappeared and heavy snow
Has wrapped its counterpane around my heart;
What stirred me poignantly, not long ago,
Now brings distress and tears my soul apart.
Untroubled hours of August could not last,
But what I termed a fugitive romance,
Is very life blood now and holds me fast,
Helpless, because befogged eyes looked askance
On what today, I would give much to find.
Rude January blasts have chastened me
And loneliness pushed gnawing doubt behind
And set my tightly prisoned spirit free.
Beloved, I would gladly give my sight
If I could only hear your voice tonight.

AUTUMN

Go quickly now, before the flowers fade
With autumn winds, — before the last leaves fall;
Do not delay lest some event persuade
Me, love can never vanish past recall.
Midsummer madness wrapped impassioned arms
Around us, melting vestiges of snow
And working devastation with its charms,
Till in perplexity, we did not know
Our romance was an evanescent thing,
And like a carefree bird, would fly away
To come back somewhere else another spring,
With no remembrance of yesterday.
As lilies languish, so love cannot last,
And in a fleeting interval is past.

Antoni Gronowicz
132 East 82nd Street
New York 28, New York

THE GIRL CALLED SALA

"Where can she be?" Zosia asked frowning.

"Her grandfather will be worried if he is not with us when we go home," Franek said.

"I know, but what can we do?" Zosia asked, making no effort to hide her irritation.

"Sala! Sala! Sarah!" Franek called. His shout went to the hill beyond the village and drifted back lightly.

"That stupid echo!" Zosia exclaimed. "For a moment I thought it was Sarah making fun of us."

"Or some Gestapo fellow," Franek added, with scorn in his rough boyish voice. "What do you bet, Zosia, that by tomorrow the 'New Order' will issue a command that we must not shout in our meadow?"

Every morning the three young people, Zosia, Franek and Sarah, who was the daughter of Abramson, the local storekeeper who had been shot to death in front of his home by a Nazi bullet, drove the cows from Lipniki to the village pastureland.

"I'm going home," Zosia announced. "I'm tired of hunting for Sala. Do you think she'd search for us if we were missing. Not on your life! She'd forget us, and start drawing a picture of her old home, or a castle wall, or something else. I know her."

"Look!" he whispered suddenly. "Do you see what I see?"

"What is it — the spirit of Bronka walking in the fields?" Zosia asked. Bronka was a girl who had fooled the Gestapo and had helped three partisans to escape to the Polish army. She and two of her companions had been caught and shot, and the legend that Bronka's spirit walked in the meadow of her native village had been told in Lipniki ever since.

"No, not Bronka's spirit," Franek murmured, "Look over there! Do you see dark things wriggling on the ground?"

"Who? Who?" Zosia cried. "Not the Gestapo men?" he began to whisper.

"Hush!" Franek ordered. "The Gestapo men are still in the woods. Look, you may see for yourself — three partisans are crawling this way."

"Oh, I am afraid," Zosia sobbed. "I want to go home. Come on, please!"

"Oh, look!" she whispered. "One of them is Sala."

Franek said calmly, "I am going to crawl out there and help. We can hide them in the haystack here.

"No! No!" Zosia cried. "You can't, Franek! The Gestapo men are right over there. They'll see you for sure."

Franek had no time to argue. He crept out and flat to the ground he inched forward. In a few seconds he was back, dragging one of the exhausted men into shelter. Sarah came next, and together she and Franek pulled the other men from the stubble.

"The Gestapo men have turned and

are coming this way," Zosia murmured. Sala's lips were cut and bleeding, her dress was torn and muddy, burrs were entangled in her hair.

"I have it!" Franek exclaimed. "We are cowherds — which is perfectly true — and you, Sala, went into the woods to hunt a cow that had fallen into the swamp and underbrush when the storm began."

"But — but," Zosia stammered, "we can't really hide the men. The partisans will surely be found — and then what will the Gestapo do to us?"

Sarah grinned. "Don't be afraid," she soothed. "The men are safe." Some sort of secret sparkled in her eyes.

"Hey, you there!" One of the Gestapo men shouted. "Where are those men who were crawling across this meadow a few minutes ago?"

Sarah looked up with an expression of surprise. "Why — why — " she began, "we did not see anyone." She looked from one companion to the other for corroboration.

Franek shook his head and Zosia shook hers. Sarah looked squarely at the questioner. "We heard your shots, but we never thought of partisans. We thought our 'superior brothers' were out hunting."

The Gestapo men laughed. They liked that term 'superior brothers'.

"What are you doing here?" the Nazi with the stripes on his arm asked, aiming his rifle at the younger girl's head. Zosia trembled, the color left her cheeks.

"We are cowherds," Sarah spoke for her. "You must know us well for we look after your cattle every day."

"What do you mean our cattle?" the sergeant asked. "You are stalling, girl. You are clever and smart like a Jew. Speak up, and tell us — where did those partisans go?"

Franek interrupted. "My friend spoke the truth. Does not everything in Poland belong to the 'New Order'. And who but the Nazis own the 'New Order'?"

"You are right," the sergeant agreed. "They are fine pure bred animals, just like us Germans. Superior. Strong. The masters of the 'New Order'!" The two slapped their legs and laughed jovially. Even Zosia was beginning to draw a sigh of relief, when the sergeant suddenly stepped close to Sarah and stared at her narrowly.

"It seems to me I've seen you before," he said. "If you're a cowherd, how did you scratch your face and hands and tear your clothing?"

"That's simple," Sarah answered. "I went into the underbrush to rescue a cow that was frightened by the lightning and ran away. If you don't believe me," she continued bravely, "you can go over there now and find her."

The fat sergeant was thrusting a fork into the haystack. In, in, in it went — and came out easily. "Nothing there," he muttered.

"I'll go back now and see what I can do with that cow," Sarah said. She stole quickly away. Zosia and Franek walked across the meadow.

The sun was going down, and the mothers of Lipniki had already put their babies into their cribs, when shrill sirens burst the evening quiet. The sirens roared out again. Everyone in Lipniki knew what they meant — every villager

ust go to the schoolyard where the azi police would surround them with cordon of rope. Only old grandfather oszko Abramson sat in the dark cellar d waited impatiently for his Sarah.

Now the people went forth from their omes slowly, but there was no craven ar in them as they went. Franek and osia were near the school door. Sala's dopted grandfather Jankowski, who as hiding her real grandfather Moszko, entured to sit down on the steps puffg away at his smouldering pipe.

At that moment Sarah slipped unobusively under the rope and crept to her dopted grandfather's side. The old an took her hand in his. In the same stant a Nazi officer lumbered out of he schoolhouse.

"The country around Lipniki is inested with partisans," he thundered, and we know that you are carrying ood to them."

"No! No!" the schoolmaster shouted.

"A few stragglers have escaped over he borders," the officer said, ignoring he schoolmaster's interruption. The ause was one of complete silence.

"Listen well to what I am about to ay! Three partisans were seen crawling cross the meadow today and one of hem was a Jew! If they are not caught y dawn tomorrow, three among you vill pay with your lives!"

"I will tell you their names — Franek, Zosia and Sala!" the pompous officer talked into the schoolroom. The door closed.

Sarah and her adopted grandfather did not look at each other. He loved this ittle girl as if she were his real grandchild. Sala's head was high, and so were the heads of Zosia and Franek as they joined her. They knew what to expect; once they arrived at the gate of the schoolyard, the Nazi guard would seize them and lock them in the schoolroom.

The Nazi guards in the schoolroom found it hard to keep awake. There were two of them and they were supposed to take turns in watching the prisoners.

"They are going to kill us," Zosia moaned. "I can't stand it, all night long in this room."

Sarah's hand gripped Zosia's. "The floor is not so new that it hasn't a hole in it," she breathed.

"But it couldn't have," Franek answered. "Remember, we helped lay it ourselves. Strong oak boards."

"I made a trap door — just for fun," Sarah said. "I saw one in the castle on the hill one day when I went there with my grandfather, and drew it in my book. Then when the floor was being laid, I cut the boards."

It was Franek who had to be restrained this time. If Sarah had not clutched his arm, he would have whistled in delight. "Where is it?" he whispered.

"It is somewhere in this room," Sarah whispered. "We will be safe at their camp in the woods. I know the way. I've been there many times."

"But where are the hidden partisans?" asked Zosia.

"I know!" Franek exclaimed. "Some of them are with the cow that was caught in the mire. A fine reception those Gestapo men would have got if they'd accepted Sala's invitation to investigate the lost cow."

Sala laughingly agreed. "And some have been hiding in holes in the ground underneath the haystacks — where we hid those two this afternoon," she added proudly.

"I suppose you made them, like the trap door, because you were pretending you were digging the foundations of a castle," Franek said with a low laugh.

Grandfather Jankowski and I dug them in the night," Sarah replied.

Crawling from tree shadow to tree shadow, they followed Sarah across the yard. "Courage," Sarah whispered. "We have only to cross the field and we'll be safe."

Warmed and fed, Zosia lay on the ground watching the partisans gathered in a group around Sarah, who sat beside her. This was a new Sarah who was brave and daring and knew how to do things. Sarah was a patriot, like the heroes who had fought for Poland's freedom in the past. When the tale of these cruel years of starvation and bloodshed was written, Sarah Abramson's name would be in the record.

Zosia edged closer to the girl. "Sala," she whispered, "dear Sala, you are so brave. At school we used to call you a dreamer but we were wrong, Sala. You are a great Polish heroine just like Bronka.

Mary Boyd Wagner
321 East 43rd Street
New York 17, New York

WHITE NIGHT

No moon rode in the sky; nor one pale star,
Slashing the dark with slender scimitar,
Could send its glimmer through the overlay
Of clouds; nor borealis gleamed afar.

There was no burning cottage lamp to play
Among the shadows, pushing them away
With pallid beams; nor lurid lantern glow.
No tiniest candle cast a faltering ray.

Blending into the backdrop of the snow,
The orchard trees, down-covered, did not show;
But by the aid of no apparent light
I saw a rabbit hopping to and fro.

The self-illuminated envelope of white
Dissolved the thickened blackness of the night.

Antoinette Scudder
Paper Mill Playhouse
Millburn, New Jersey

BUTTERFLY BLUES

She had arranged them carefully on the slightly frayed linen cover of the bureau — just as carefully as though they had been gems of great price — diamonds, rubies, sapphires. Sapphires — that was it — the color of an artist's aura, so a theosophical friend had told her. Blue — glamorous and compelling as a tropical midnight or elusive and delicate as the gleam in an opal's heart.

She shook herself. "I'm getting quite rhapsodical," she said aloud. She crossed to the window and peered out — no rhapsody of blue there. Sky and sea and sand and all sullen shades of grey with unlovely glints of green and umber. Big waves rolling in — even the foam had an ugly curdled look. Not worth while going out today — the few figures on the boardwalk were lurching and swaying grotesquely against the wind and a swoop of rain spattered the glass. "Probably needs washing anyway."

She looked about her. The room wasn't exactly glamorous — the walls with gilt arabesques on a mottled salmon background, the thick green carpets, the sedate armchairs, the bed with demurely ruffled cover. Doctor Burnett had recommended "a quiet family hotel, homelike you know." Homelike — how her mother would have laughed. But she did feel a lot better for the week she had spent here.

She strolled over to the bureau again and looked at the trinkets. The cuff links with diminutive seahorses swimming in blue like their Caribbean waters — the rather comic brooch for Aunt Henrietta with a black cat arching its back on a midnight blue sky. Aunt Henrietta was a good sport — she would be amused not vexed. But the bracelet she had meant for Connie — the medallions showing tiny fairies dancing on the iridescent blue background — dancing — whirling, floating, leaping ——

She kicked off her slippers, raised her arms and whirled about — not so easy on this carpet — have the other guests been spilling tea and syrup and stuff on it to give such a sticky texture? Try a "cabriole", springing high and striking one foot behind the other. Well, her heart gave a thump and she did feel a bit dizzy. The doctor had said: "No dancing or dancing exercises for a good while now, young lady." He had been kindly vague but she had known he meant none for weeks — maybe months. He might have danced waltzes and two-steps in his youth but never her kind of dancing. He could not know the misery of thinking how the loss of one day's practice meant a tiny, malicious stiffening of the muscles, an infinitesimal loss of that perfect balance of mind and heart and body.

Oh, if she had only begun the art she loved so earlier — if her father hadn't been a prominent banker and her mother a leading socialite who never visioned

anything for her daughter but a select boarding school, a few years' impressive entertaining and marriage with some highly eligible young man. Though her parents had been good sports about her working seriously at what they still regarded as a whim. "A great many girls do go in for things like that nowadays." And seeing that she had not begun till she was nearly through her teens she had done well. Professor Melignis had counted her one of his most promising pupils. She had given some successful recitals and even started a class of her own. She hoped those girls would stick by her. But if she could have started as a *prima ballerina assoluta* should, at four or five years old. Have spent the hours given to French, and mathematics, and bridge, and going to parties she didn't much care for, in that unremitting training — agonizing at first, she had heard, but ending in ecstasy and triumph.

She sat down and reached for the small oval tray that had two great blue butterflies — Brazilian ones — imprisoned under an oval of glass. She was glad she had found the little shop that specialized in jewelry and art objects made with butterfly wings. This tray she would keep herself.

What a wonderful dance to represent the life of a blue Brazilian butterfly — the swoop of azure wings among long and tangled vines, fluttering and stirring above great blossoms like whorls of ruby and topaz and amethyst — basking in intolerable sunshine, tossed and whirled by a sudden wind.

She stood up and slipped off all her garments but the thin silk slip. She stood where she could see herself in the rather blurred mirror above the bureau. Not full length but it would have to do. She raised her arms, extended them, she bent almost touching the carpet with her forehead. She spun and leaped — why, it was not tiring after all — she felt as though she were really flying — flying above a sun drenched, murmuring forest. She felt that she had wings — wings like a giant butterfly. They glanced and shimmered, the blueness of them flashed back from the mirror, crept up the wall like tiny ripples of sapphire. Wings other than her own seemed to beat and quiver beside her, they curved round her like a gleaming, translucent wall. They were helping her up and farther up above the tallest palms — that blueness above could not be the ceiling with its ugly electric chandelier. It was a sunfilled tropic sky, no, a midnight sky — "the pavement of a sapphire", a dazzle of stars.

"I never approved of her going in for that dancing so strenuously," the doctor said. "Her heart action never was quite up to par and that attack of flu has weakened it. You should never have let her go down there alone."

"Fred had to go to that bankers' convention in Chicago," her mother tearfully replied. "I wanted to go with him — my only sister lives out there. I hadn't seen her for three years. We meant to take Linda south when we returned. Some of her friends were away and the others didn't care to go to Atlantic City — rather dead this time of year."

"Well, it cannot be helped now." The doctor shook his head.

"She wanted you to have these." Linda's mother held out the butterfly cuff links. "There were several trinkets of this kind on the bureau and we found a list in her handbag of the people she meant to give them to. But — this was strange — lying on the floor near her was an oval tray. The glass was broken to bits but you could see printed on the paper backing the outlines of two large butterflies. We couldn't find them anywhere, and the hotel people said that when they went up the door and windows were locked tight ——."

Mary M. Pronovost
1421 Coolidge Avenue
National City, California

SNOWFALL

What was there left to say?
The wind of your words had iced my tears,
And cut the bloom from the April-years;
I watched you walk away.

Sorrow was frozen in my eyes;
Then colder than your blizzard-replies
That struck and shattered the whys

The desolate snow of your leaving
Drifted down on my heart when it came . . .
Strange, that its mercy was like a flame
That thawed the numbness of my grieving.

Edward McNamee
147-37 Beech Avenue
Flushing 55, New York

SAD-FACED CLOWN

the circus
sketches man here in a deadfall
of disingenuousness
with the meek compromise
the dispirited dissolution
and the dumbly articulate appeal
of a pathetic pierrot
where our eyes frame
through spiritual astigmatism
a silent yet hortatory figure
while the egregious pride
hid in our mind's secret chasms
now struggles to recant

this is man's
ragged recapitulation
of the long and vengeful years
a song off-key
dejection's wistful yearning spectre
where a trillion unkindnesses
have spawned this tragic consciousness
deep in our minds forever
are we then to laugh
when here stands hunger cold defeat
(when here stand we ourselves)
attitudinized for a mirrored interim
of self-contemplation while we
sit mentally-disturbed by misery's
grease-paint gloom

are we then to glow
in an ebullience of happiness
at this transposition of life's groan
to confines of amusement and delight
where this cipher of the soul
broods friendless and heart-brokenly alone
(but only that we laugh)
this singed moth of sorrow
nakedly revealed in merciless kilowatts
as the sad entity
behind our own flesh and blood façade
our camouflage of overweening swagger
and insufferable egotism
this sharp-edged travesty of our own
never-doubted proud perfection

Helen Harrington
Lamoni, Iowa

THESE ARE THE MEN

These are the men who sweat in the full sun
and watch the hot fields shrivel the corn rows; these
are the men who planted in dust, nor spoke of faith.

You have seen them — beating the clouds to the windrow
— sometimes —
skin hardened by weather, hands toughened by tools,
legs, backs, weary; determination in chins and eyes.

Come along; go with them —
in the green morning when the orchards blossom and their hearts open to the streams,
to the cattle on the bottomlands, to the earth scored by the plow —
Race against time with them — and the rain — in the spring; burn your headlights through the night —
Sift the soil in your hands, test it, give to it what it needs from the cloudy dump trucks —
Bathe the seed as though it were a baby — precious as a baby — in the black gold from the little boxes —
Fight the weeds!

Come with the spray to the field, with the hoe to the fence row, and always a little too early, or too late, or with the air not right —
Rush to garner the bloom of the alfalfa — Breakdown in a hayfield —
And, while the sun burns it up and the announcer cries storm, hurry the wrenches and the man who must order the parts —

The corn that yellowed in flood, browns in drouth —
Watch it reach to the tight-fisted sky, then droop, and know you can do nothing about it —
Turn to something else — desperately — a job in town for a few days, work at a neighbor's —
Then, if all turns out all right, and sometimes it does, hear the radio say,
"A bumper crop — Lower prices — "

Yes, come along with them —
dusty, sweating, fighting whims of nature and men —
Tell them to stand on their own feet!

Frances Angevine Gray
345 Yarmouth Road
Rochester 10, New York

STALLION IN THE SNOW

"Look, Mother," said Carol. "See the landscape I made." Carol came in from the kitchen, carrying in both hands the oval mirror that Elise occasionally used on the table under a floral centerpiece. On it the child had somehow constructed a miniature winter world.

"It's lovely, dear," Elise said wonderingly. Was it accident or an artist's unconscious perception that had prompted her daughter's fingers to make such an enchanting thing? "Put it on the table where we can enjoy it while we eat."

Made of some such prosaic material as powdered soap, probably, was the snow that lay deep on this wilderness world. Near one end of the oval was a towering pine tree, standing on a little knoll. At the other end the snow had been pushed away to show the mirror beneath. The cleared space became a little pool, frozen over, and near its margin stood a white porcelain stallion, nuzzling the icy edge, is if in search of water. A short distance from him stood another white horse, head up, straining to catch some scent on the wintry air. The whole scene was so perfectly in proportion that it had for Elise an air of complete reality. It suggested too, within its limited range, a vast expanse of snow stretching out to some far horizon.

The family admired Carol's effort at lunch, but no one seemed as impressed as her mother was. Elise's eyes were constantly on the little scene as she ate, while the family conversation flowed warmly around her. As a line of great poetry will sometimes make walls melt around you, allowing you to escape momentarily from all that tangibly encloses you, so this miniature scene seemed to transport Elise out into the January world beyond her doors, and off to remote distances.

Once she had a curious feeling, so intently did she watch the horses by the frozen pool. It was a sensation of slight dizziness, the feeling she had once had looking down from an Alpine precipice to a neat village far below, a fear of falling and landing suddenly among those toy-like houses. She pulled herself back with a start.

"Are you going skating this afternoon, Carol?" she asked her daughter.

"I want to," mumbled Carol, finishing the last of her cake, "But I wish Daddy would call for me at school and go too."

"Perhaps I could get away from the office by four," her father considered, "if there aren't too many patients."

Elise's eyes had returned to the pine tree. The snow around its base was mingled with scattered pine needles. She could smell the scent of pine, on air growing suddenly colder. With an effort she pulled herself back.

"I might pick you up at school," her husband was saying to Carol, "and we could get in an hour or two . . . "

Elise strode across the snow. It did not creak under her boots. The air was cold and fresh, but not piercing. She had thought that these were wild horses, but neither seemed disturbed by her approach. The stallion, sniffing at the ice by the edge of the pool, whinnied softly, glad to see her. He nuzzled her side, searching for the salt he knew she carried in the pocket of her jacket. The other horse tossed his head, satisfied at last of the nature of the scent he had caught on the wind. He same softly over to her and ate one of the rough lumps of salt she produced for him. Everywhere was deep and lovely silence, white snow, broken by rare pine trees, running off into the distance to join the gray-white sky. Elise felt a keen delight in the quiet and the silent companionship of the two white horses.

She stroked the stallion's warm neck, wishing for a saddle and bridle. Perhaps she might ride him without either, as she had often ridden before. Gently she coaxed him over with her to the little knoll where the tall pine tree rose. Standing on the packed snow on this higher level, after several attempts she managed to scramble up on the stallion's back. He was amazingly docile for so spirited an animal, standing and waiting patiently until she gained her seat. The long, voluminous green velvet skirt at first seemed a strange riding-habit, but she managed it naturally enough, dug her knees into the sides of her mount, and twisted her fingers in his mane. He started off in a swift, easy pace across the snow. The other horse ran close behind them. Elise could feel his breath over her right shoulder. The stallion seemed to sense her slightest wish and they moved as one, in a harmony of flowing motion. The cold air rushed past her cheeks and she breathed deeply. The world was a vast stretch of pale snow and blanched sky, punctuated by pointed pines.

Suddenly the stallion slowed down and stopped. Both horses sniffed uneasily. For a moment Elise heard nothing but their puffing breath. Then her mount quivered, and she sensed his anxiety over some taint borne on the air. At a loss herself, she did not attempt to guide him, but patted his neck reassuringly.

For a few seconds they waited in a curious, troubled suspense. Then Elise felt the stallion gather himself beneath her for a sudden plunge. She glanced back over her shoulder, and with a gasp she recognized the cause of the horse's panic. Far behind them a gray line was moving across the snow. The stallion's fright communicated itself to her, but she bent all her energies to the task of staying on his back. The riderless horse passed them and went galloping on ahead.

Risking a backward look, Elise saw that the wolf pack was gaining on them, in spite of speed that sent rushing air chill against her damp temples. She began to realize the extent of her peril, trying to cling to the white horse without saddle or bridle. The stallion's coat was dripping white satin, and foam flecked her green velvet. Soon she could see the eyes of the nearest wolf glowing dull red, like coals of fire. Desperately she twisted her fingers in the horse's man, but long white hairs came loose in

her grasp. The stallion gave a frightened plunge. She was falling . . .

"At four, then," Elise heard her husband say as he rose from his chair. He walked around the table and leaned over her for a casual goodby kiss. As his eyes fell on her face, his expression changed.

"Are you all right, dear?" he asked quickly.

Elise managed a smile and a nod, although under the table the knuckles of her clenched hands were white. How explain to anyone the crevasse in time and space that had suddenly opened up under her feet, from the depths of which she had so perilously returned?

Her husband and child went out, still talking, and she heard the front door close behind them. . . . Elise sat still. In the center of the table two porcelain horses stood on her oval mirror beside piles of frankly artificial snow. When the maid entered the room to clear the table, Elise found her voice.

"Take this centerpiece out, Mary, please," she said. "I'll arrange the freesias for the table before dinner time."

TWELFTH NIGHT SONG

As vivid as the holly,
The green and glossy holly,
The scarlet-jeweled holly,
The love you offered me.

But thorny as the holly,
As cruel-sharp as holly
As hard to hold as holly,
Your love turned out to be.

The holly by Epiphany
Is dried and thrown away,
And what you pledged at Yule-tide
You'll quite forget by May.

So on the Twelfth Night bonfire,
Like spruce and mistletoe,
Like balsam, pine and holly,
Your Christmas vows shall go.

Annie P. Thomas
3100 St. Paul Street
Baltimore 18, Maryland

GROUP COMPLETE

Display, inanimate, behind a plate of glass;
"Crustacean", tagged, to serve now weary
note-books of "Beginner's Class":
Impersonal convolutions seen in lifeless form,
correct for registration with completed norm.
Far cry from other day when terror-struck —
tide-left — I trembled at an eager step
and shadow-hand, abandoned and bereft,
upon an alien sand!
Blackout, with horror borne from intermittent
toll of buoy's bell. I hugged but panic
in the comfort of my folded shell.

Florence A. Dietz
30 Thurston Avenue
Trenton 8, New Jersey

THE STRONG INTANGIBLES

Once upon a stolen hour,
I turned away from smug reality,
Tempted by the pulsing power
Of things that sought to be a part of me:
Those strong intangibles that flow
Star-wide, between the breath of fire and frost,
That challenge me to seek and know
Their priceless value at such humble cost.

This teeming world reposed in space,
I stooped to pick a small, man-trampled flower —
And thinking on this symbol, turned to face
Reality — charmed by that stolen hour.

David B. Steinman
117 Liberty Street
New York 6, New York

THE SILENT GARDEN

A melancholy stillness now enfolds me,
In loneliness the branches mutely sway;
Disconsolate I wander in my garden —
The vagrant songsters have not come this way.

I miss the robins splashing in the rock-pool,
The thrushes fluting love-songs from the trees;
The flight of bluebirds through the golden sunlight,
The lilt of meadowlarks and chickadees.

I miss the hummingbirds imbibing nectar
With dartling bills and flash of ruby throat;
The gaily-colored Tanagers and buntings,
The purple martin and his cheery note.

But suddenly my spirit lifts to rapture —
On topmost bough I hear a mockingbird;
The solitary harbinger is warbling
The sweetest music mortal ever heard.

Robert Wood Clack
209 West Downie Street
Alma, Michigan

THE WILD SWANS

Throughout the night the tempest's furies rage,
And fan back into flame the dead coals of my sorrow!
With dawn I climb the stairs to my lone tower,
To sit there like a songbird in a cage,
And vainly wait for him I hope will come tomorrow!

Outside the raindrops still are falling fast;
Along the swollen streams the trees' torn boughs are swimming;
In gardens down below, each peony flower
Has given up a fight that could not last
Against the storm — with drooping head its hues are dimming!

With clearing skies now two wild swans appear,
Beneath the shelter of my turret's eaves they hover.
They pass close by the window of my bower;
Upon each wing I drop a yearning tear,
In hopes they'll carry it to my belated lover!

THE PINK LOTUS BUD

A lotus bud is opening where the pool lies deep;
Out toward the flower I cast a silken line.
Weird mysteries which watery shadows keep
Are troubled; their calm silence now is broken!
The rippling circles widen to entwine
The lily pads. The lotus is a token
Of the heart of my beloved, which I try
To capture with a silken noose. The setting sun
Now reddens all the western sky,
And floats down toward the far horizon's rim,
Where gradually it pauses in its flight,
Dissolves, and sinks at last to drown in night!
And as the twilight shadows dim,
The twinkling stars come out from hiding, one by one!

Disconsolate, I turn and mount the stair
To seek my lonely, melancholy room.
I stop before my truthful mirror, where
I gaze upon my sadly aging features.
Alas, of all earth's living creatures,
It is only the flowering plants that bloom
And know the secret of renewing youth,
Of putting forth fresh shoots, and growing green again!
So, hopeless, recognizing truth
I ponder the vicissitudes of lotus flowers and men!

NOTE: These poems are translations from the Chinese of Li Yi-hang (806–832).

Abigail Ann Hamblen
8 Barnes Road
Newton, Massachusetts

THE VOCATION

Knowing Charlotte was the first really disturbing experience Douglas Masters had. He was to have many afterward, of course, because he was very young at the time — very young, and a little solemn as only the very young are. He was in his first year at the theological seminary, and he was sent out to assist the rector of a thriving suburban church nearby. It gave him great satisfaction to go into that high-spired stone church: it was Gothic and traditional and solid. He liked the elaborately worked candelabra on the altar, and the mellow, rolling tones of the really fine pipe organ. The sunlight came through the magenta and purple and bottle-green of the windows. The very air was scented with discreet and unyielding wealth; the pews were cushioned in maroon velvet; the panelling was mahogany. It was just what he secretly felt a church ought to be, and he was proud to see his name on its weekly calendars — his name elegantly printed in Old English, like the rector's, and the organist's, and Charlotte Van Horne's, the Director of Religious Education.

Douglas met her first at the rectory, at dinner. She acknowledged the introduction with a cool smile. "Another partner in crime! Hope you like us." He was a little shocked, but he saw the rector smiling, and Mrs. Curtis, too, so he knew it was all right.

She was very thin — he thought to himself he'd never seen a girl with so small a waist — in fact, so small all over, although she was nearly as tall as he. Her skin was almost without color, so that her eyes, large and dark seemed enormous, and very black. She spoke little, but when she did, everyone listened and laughed. And during the weeks that followed he discovered that she was amazingly efficient, her work always done ahead of time.

One of his duties was assisting her at the Sunday-school chapel services. Very stern and young he was in his long black gown as he marshalled the children into line to march into the tiny sanctuary. There, before the exquisite altar, with its ivory-tinted candles and its chased silver vase of flowers, he felt himself, as nowhere else, truly dedicated.

Outside the door he might speak crisply to a recalcitrant boy or a small, giggling girl; he might be very firm and authoritative, his mouth very straight. Inside that tiny, holy place, with the obediently kneeling pupils, the responses coming clear to his ear, he felt no sternness, only a great delight that was pride and something else — something like the pure rush of creativity. The sheer joy of ministering before the altar made up for the troubles with shoving, shouting little boys, and the tiresome Scout picnics. Someday these minor annoyances would be in another's hands. Someday he would be no mere student assistant

ut a full-fledged clergyman. He would o before the main altar, into an in-ffable beauty of holiness, into the rap-ure he knew was there. He would try o give his people a sense of what he elt God's glory was.

Douglas had done well in school al-ways, in spite of many illnesses. He was uot robust now, but he stood very straight, making the most of his slightly nder-average height, and his expression was usually serious behind the thick enses of his eye glasses.

He had always found it difficult to ak with strangers, and during his first weeks at St. Barnabas' he had a little rouble finding just the right thing to ay at a parish supper, or during the ocial hour following a meeting. He watched Charlotte move about, talking with everyone, and he envied her her ease. But then she'd been at it long, he reflected; she'd been here five years, and she knew these people. She knew just which ones were the parents and grand-parents of the Sunday-school children.

Standing beside him in the hall of a Sunday morning, watching the children come in, greeting the parents who brought them, she would give him bits of information in a barely audible voice. "See that woman just getting out of the Cadillac? Mrs. Avery. A cool million stashed away, thanks to getting herself married to the man just in time. Quite a girl. And that man trying to park the blue Buick — hold on to your uppers when *he* goes by. They say nothing's safe around him. Oh, here come those Donnellson twins! Brats from the word go — the spit-ball kind of brat."

Yet Charlotte was a wonderful director of religious education. She wrote little stories to supplement the printed lesson materials, and they were gentle and beautiful. One time she had all the younger children go outside, on the lawn, and there she talked to them of the visible evidences of God's plan in the universe — the fading of summer into brilliant autumn, preparing the world for a restful sleep; the miracle of dying leaves, and frost, and blackened flowers that sink down only to live again in the spring. "Little animals get ready for winter; little soft squirrels and bunnies all come under God's loving laws, framed for the care of his creation." Her voice had a silvery quality about it that made it all sound lovely, like poetry.

He tried to compliment her afterward. "That was a nice talk you gave, Miss Van Horne."

She gave him a swift, amused glance. "I always feel like Louisa May Alcott when I get going," she said. He felt a sense of shock, but he could think of nothing to say.

A few weeks after that came a Saturday that was fine — the warm sort of day that in late autumn seems a gracious gift. It was a day for a walk, and after lunch Douglas started out alone, letting the golden air surround him, lead him. After he left the town, he went slowly, savoring the smoky flavor of the afternoon. He went down a lonely country road, scuffing the fallen leaves like a boy. The tree branches met over his head high and solemn; the place had the dignity of a cathedral, he thought. Then the road came out to an open place, and there was a deserted apple

orchard at his left. A few small gnarled apples lay about here and there. He climbed the stone wall and confiscated some. They were little and wormy, but they tasted of the sun and of the peace of the place. He saw a little brook going through the orchard, and he followed it, watching leaves floating on its small shining waters, eating a little, sour- tasting apple. Almost at the outer side of the orchard, he became conscious of cigarette smoke. And coming around a great outcropping of rock that blocked his view, he saw a slender familiar figure sitting, solitary, beside the little stream. Charlotte.

He paused in his surprise; she saw him at that instant. "Well, well," she said, "Small world, what?" He still stood, uncertain.

"Will you join me?" she asked, "It's quite nice here — peaceful-like. Draw up a chair." She held out her cigarettes to him and he took one hesitantly before he sat down. She was sitting comfortably propped against a high rock, and she moved over to make room for him against it. They sat quietly for a few moments, looking off to the distant hills, luminous blue, the nearer fields richly ochre.

Finally Douglas spoke. "This is certainly a beautiful place, isn't it?" It sounded stiff, he knew, but he must say something.

"Um." Charlotte ground out her cigarette carefully against a boulder near her, and let her thin hands lie together in her lap. "I found this little corner two or three years ago, and I come to it every so often — when things gang up on me." She was not looking at him; her dark gaze was on the warm fields before them.

A little at a loss, he said lamely, "Meditation is supposed to be very helpful."

"I'm afraid meditation won't do much in my case," she answered, and turned to look at him. Her eyes made something in him start, and he felt his face flushing in embarrassment. He was only a boy, after all, and as yet unused to the sight of raw suffering. He remembered the time his dog, Prince, had been run over. He himself had gathered the poor battered body up in his arms, and the dying animal had turned on him a look of such pain that he had felt sick, deep inside. For days that look had haunted him. The look in Charlotte Van Horne's eyes would haunt him, too, even if she were a clever, self-sufficient woman.

His mind groped for words, but found none. She gave a little laugh. "That was sort of ambiguous, wasn't it- Excuse it — I'm always saying things and then wishing I hadn't."

"It's — it's all right," he said uncomfortably, not looking at her. He wanted to leave — but how could he? Agonizedly self-conscious he gazed silently at the glowing fields.

"Rough on the innocent bystander, having a person emote all around," said Charlotte, "That's why I come away here. The fact is, Douglas Masters, I can't have what I want, and what I have I don't care a mildewed fig about. Which means I must creep off, every so often, to lick my wounds."

Still awkward in his unease, the boy spoke. "That's — that's too bad."

"Um." She put her dark head back

gainst the great rock and gazed far ff at the hills. "There's someone n the world — a wonderful someone. You want him with every inch of you, nd no moment makes sense without im. You had him just a few months, nd you feed yourself on the memory of hat. But inside you turn to ashes be- ause a memory isn't enough and you're ired. And you can never have him gain — not a smile of him, or a curl of air, or a kiss — nothing — because he went to war and came back a psycho, nd he's shut up somewhere, wild and trange — and he's not yours anymore. He's dead. He's dead, and you'll never ave him again." She did not move as he spoke. Her voice was even and full.

Douglas Masters had never felt so wretched. Something beat through his brain: he must say something —

"Your work," he spoke timidly. "You're doing such good work. You're serving God — that should be some help . . .

"God!" It was a sneer. Horrified, he spoke again. "You mean you don't — ?"

She looked at him. "No. Not for years."

"But then you're — you're lying!" His hurt young heart beat fast in its earnestness — "You couldn't do what you're doing if you're an — an atheist." He almost whispered the last word. He remembered that her father had been a clergyman, and horror swept over him.

She shrugged. "It's a trade, like any other," she said. "And it's all I know. Why not? Does a confectioner have to like chocolate creams? Maybe they give him indigestion. But he sells them, doesn't he? Value handed over; value received."

There was silence for a space. Then she smiled at him. "Don't worry, Douglas," she said, and her voice again had that odd silvery ring. "I shouldn't have talked, and bothered you. Just forget what I said. I'm not always as morbid as I am today. I guess nature sees to it that you can't suffer quite all the time."

She looked away. "This is his — his birthday."

Again there was silence. The afternoon was waning softly, and a mist was starting to creep over the fields. "It's getting cooler," Charlotte said. "I suppose we'd better not stay here much longer. Let's have another cigarette, and then go."

So they went together back to the town, and it was all over. But Douglas Masters did not sleep easily that night; growing older can be — usually is — difficult.

Charlotte B. Wells
101 Farnsworth Avenue
Bordentown, New Jersey

BEETHOVEN AND THE FAUN

Shelley crushed Deborah's letter, which had shattered him, into his pocket, as the tower clock struck eight.

"I can't give her up," he said to himself hopelessly.

Throwing crumpled papers into the wastebasket, he rose from his desk, stood for a moment before the mirror to brush his stubborn dark hair, then strode down the dormitory stairs.

"A senior majoring in English, yet after a week I can't say what's on my mind," he thought, his sensitive face looking drawn. "What if my supposed writing talent isn't strong enough to stand up to a crisis, when my family's sacrificed so much for me!" Fear surged through him.

Shelley had not gone to the Commons for supper, after his typing job, but had eaten a snack in his own room to have time to write Deborah before the concert, determining not to pull his punches. Did she think their engagement could be broken as lightly as a swimming date?

But now, outside in the dusk, he was in no mood for music which had always been his panacea. The idea of joining other students thronging toward the open amphitheater in the dell was repellent. He turned in the opposite direction. A walk might clear his thoughts.

"Good evening," said a quiet voice.

Turning, Shelley saw the girl who sat across the aisle in creative writing. Her eyes dropped shyly.

"Hello there," he called over his shoulder.

Coming to the lake, the sunset's vivid reds seemed to Shelley a reflection of his own emotions. He could not remember ever sharing a sunset with Deborah. She had been the witchery of moonlight since high school days. Was he never to lose the pain of remembering her laughing eyes, husky voice, the pressure of her golden-tan cheek against his?

He took the path through the woods that half encircled the amphitheater, surprised by the clearness of the four-note, ominous horn call, opening Beethoven's Fifth symphony, as it floated through the trees. Dew sharpened the sweetness of wild berries and honeysuckle. Fresh, cool air on his neck relaxed him.

Suddenly, under the spell of the music, Shelley imagined he saw a faun dart out behind a hemlock. Instead, it was a boy with black features, yellow shirt and green shorts running toward him.

"They chased me away," the boy said breathlessly, fear in his eyes.

Rich, well-enunciated tones identified him for Shelley as a student from the Choir School camp.

"What's wrong?" Shelley asked.

"I didn't do anything wrong," he replied. "The white boys chased me because I'm different."

Shelley probed the eyes of another unhappy person like himself. What could he say — that his own frustrations got him involved in a show-down with the

boys? This was a negative, futile way to meet such an issue.

"Take it easy, sonny," he said. I understand."

Violins and 'cellos were rising as Shelley continued, "Wonderful music! Listen to it." He put his hand for a moment on the boy's shoulder. "Beethoven."

The boy had stopped trembling. "We've studied Beethoven," he almost whispered.

"Sure," said Shelley as the two walked on. "But d'you know Beethoven was one of the most miserable children in the world, had a drunken father who got him up to practice in the middle of the night? Neighbors heard him sobbing. In his 'teens his mother, who understood him better than anyone, died."

"Wasn't he the composer who became deaf?" the boy asked.

"Right," said Shelley. "He was partly deaf when he wrote the music you hear. Nothing could be more heartbreaking for a musician than not to hear. Imagine how you'd feel!"

The boy nodded, saying wistfully, "I want to be a baritone like William Warfield."

"Then don't ever let anything discourage you. Promise?" Shelley urged anxiously.

There was the sound of children shouting; the boy's body stiffened. He started to run, calling, "Thank you, sir."

But before he disappeared two boys had caught sight of him and, with angry shouts were in hot pursuit. Then not a sound from the boys. Had they knocked him senseless?

Shelley was dumbfounded as he heard a boy-soprano voice, of unearthly beauty, singing one of William Warfield's favorites, "Where You There?"

"My little faun," he exclaimed excitedly. "He really has it." In a few moments other boy's voices joined in the harmony. Shelley's spine tingled. Tears came to his eyes.

When the singing ended, Shelley, feeling elated, resumed his walk. But his elation was short-lived. He told himself bitterly that he had made no progress toward salvaging his own problem. Thoughts of Deborah still dominated him.

Then it happened so quickly that Shelley was almost knocked off his feet. The path had led him, without his realizing it, almost to the stage of the amphitheater. Trombones struck the night with a wild burst of exultation. Simultaneously there flashed across Shelley's mind the image of his father playing his trombone evenings after driving his truck all day. Then he heard his father say, as he had so often, "Son, you've got to unload before you take on new stuff. You gotta give up to get!"

It suddenly made sense to him. Shelley knew what he must do now: accept Deborah's ultimatum. He had been so full of jealousy and retaliation there was no room for reason or purpose. He stopped, pulling out his matches and Deborah's letter. Putting a light to the envelope, he watched it burn.

"This is finis, Deborah," he said. "Marry your Olympic star you suddenly fell for. I can't do anything about it."

As the ashes fluttered to the ground Shelley felt release, as if awakening from a hypnotic spell. He could write Deborah now, with no recriminations, just a few lines wishing her well.

He came out of the woods as the orchestra was playing the finale with such triumph that it touched off a spark in Shelley. He looked up at the stars.

"God," he said reverently, "if I could write with only a little of the power Beethoven had, I'd like to say what I think he was saying tonight — that with courage and faith there's no limit to what a guy can do in this wonderful world!"

Shoulders back, Shelley turned onto the campus, whistling the trombone part. Ahead was the girl who had spoken to him when he started on his walk.

"Hello there," he called, and caught up with her.

They exclaimed over the concert, which the girl said she regretted having to leave to finish an assignment. Then she told him, "We come from the same home town. I'm Jeanie Clifton. My father knows yours."

"Well I never!" he said.

They had arrived at her dormitory. Watching her, he was amazed to see how pretty she looked.

"Why don't we go to the Bite Shop for supper tomorrow?" he suggested.

Like a sunset transforming the evening, a smile glowed over Jeanie's face. "I'd like nothing better," she said, extending her dark hand to touch his. "Meet you at six. Goodnight." She disappeared through the door.

As Shelley walked away he wondered why it had not occurred to him before now that, though many enrolled during the university's regular semester, he and Jeanie were the only two negroes on the campus this summer.

Davina Kosh
17 Grove Street
San Rafael, California

WINTER RAIN

Pewter
bells of rain drip
in leaden monotones
from an unchiming carillon
of sky.

BEYOND ALL TOMORROWS

Long past remembering
the moon — incessant —
will rise carnelian
and spill florescent fire;
or thrust a pale frond
a wafer shadow
on unremembered dust.

Dorothea Webb Anderson
3800 Elm Avenue
Brookfield, Illinois

A POET VIEWS A CITY

He would have flower pots upon the sills
Of slums, erupting jets of crimson blooms;
Their scent diffusing with the smoke from mills
To tinge dank smog with fragrance in the tombs
Of tenemented men. His sturdy rain would kneel
Upon drab pavements, scrubbing off the soil
Of staggering humanity . . . whose mute appeal
Is but for bread, not beauty; rest from toil;
A glass of wine on holidays; a furtive kiss
In the listening dark of a third floor walk-up hall;
A chance to sample love . . . They do not miss
The flower pots with crimson blooms at all.
They scuttle through damping mist like mice in flight,
Andnever see stars — the neons are so bright.

THE LOST WORD

Deep in the fastness of cerebral grays,
Elusive to the troubled, stammering lips,
Evading memory's grasp, the lost word slips
Into a crevice . . . thus the mind betrays
The man, sequestering the golden key
To transference of thought in easy flow.
The barrier is locked; man cannot go
Beyond until the captive word is free.

The wind sighs not for syllables to send
Its lilac message to a pair in love;
To give prediction of a storm above.
Man only seeks the special word to lend
Emphatic candor to intention's trend,
Or to conceal his hand in diction's glove.

Sue Abbott Boyd
5318 Summit Road
Fort Smith, Arkansas

IN LIEU OF SOUND

No longer is there magic in
the night music. Neither do
winds trace waltzes, nor
breezes reminisce, only the
cold, cold, moon gripping
the sky like a hugh round stone
makes a silent music, that we
acknowledge as our own.

BEACH FIRE

Driftwood — gray, lifeless, responds instantly to flame;
Sizzling merrily, snarling.
The bathers, huddled together in a closed circle,
Treasure the moment's warmth
Listening as one to the singing flames;
Ocean waves restlessly rocking,
Watching the smoke curl about white cliffs.

Now they peer into age old depths, tracing
Absentee memories; ghosts of other summers.
It was for this final flower;
Red glow of roses uncurled;
Warm remembrance; that they lingered —
Shadows of the sun.

Tomorrow the subway; identical skyscrapers;
But they will have their souvenirs.

Samuel M. Sargent
Box 28
Vista, Missouri

THE CITY

The city lies squared block on block,
A thing of metal, wood and rock
That goes from countryside to dock,

And turns, and grows along the shore
With warehouse, house, storehouse and store.

And flaunts for night a gleaming glow
Of lights and lights, a starry flow
Above its lanes, where bipeds go

Who pace the runway and the floor,
And pass the opening and door,

And chase their satisfactions, knock
Aside their disappointments, lock
Each small addition to their stock,

And play the game of life and lore,
And hardly ever know the score.

The city, blind to them, bestows
Its time on its queer dominoes,
And puts out tile to tile, and grows

Into the country, along the shore
With house to house, and store to store.

THE SECRET PLACE

There is a strange and hidden region. There
The Lord God comes and walks the cool of night
And there white beauty shimmers in the air,
And even darkness shines a holy light.

There does the Lord God come and make his plans
Beneath a sky that ripples like a song,
Where crystal nightbirds loudly sing the banns
Of that uniting that will come along.

Where God is . . . only loveliness can be.
Where God is . . . nothing can be tight or small.
A little while for hate and misery
While unseen forces undermine the wall.

There will go down in crashing sound and smoke
The edifice that hungers for the sky.
There will stand ruins in the thunderstroke
That will appal the shaken passerby.

In that strange region whence the stars grow bright
A golden breeze goes rippling all the air,
And everything is beauty and delight
Because Almighty God is walking there.

Carl Larsen
328 Palm Drive
Hermosa Beach, California

THEY SAY THAT LOVE IS GOLDEN, YOUNG, AND SWEET

They say that love is golden, young, and sweet,
And lives in sunlight in the thickened youth
Of every pulse that skitters to its beat.
To me, this lacks some great and solemn truth,
For my love dwells in darkness, shuns the light,
The eyes, that make a thing no longer suit.
In darkness, love is never wrong or right,
But covering all, itself is absolute.
And love is bitter, animal, and old
As first love was. It is so much a thing
That by itself it is a tale retold
A thousand times, each time more nourishing
To souls that starve for love. If words are lies
And man can somehow die, love justifies.

AND WHAT, MY LOVE, WOULD YOUR SOUL SAY TO MINE

And what, my love, would your soul say to mine,
If, meeting on a plain, they blended there.
Your soul, your own, cast from the first design
Would not stand mute. Perhaps your soul would dare
To say you love me, then perhaps, with tears
Would see the self in me I cannot see.
And if you saw the love and not the fears
Of losing you I sometimes namelessly
Call mood, then you would know my soul is yours.
Would you then ask my soul, what place is this,
Where we might stand, our selves unlocked and pure,
Without the painful metamorphosis
Of bodies, words, of life or death or plot.
My answering soul would say, it matters not.

Marie Coligon Busta
2829 South Austin Boulevard
Cicero, Illinois

SUNLESS SYMPHONY

A dark gray-softness wraps me
As from a waste land swan that
Swept her wing and bent her neck
To close me in.

I move my cheek afraid to meet the chill
But my eager heart thrusts up
To touch the wild born thrill.

I will not stand thus for long
On brown dead grass and pinched by wind
Nor will I listen to your gypsy song
That will not swear but only beckon.

Do not coax my heart that hungers
I am aware but let it pass
The love you cry is for the challenge
Never meant to last.
Yet leave a kiss, in going
Upon my soft grey swaying.

Anne Marx
65 Carman Road
Scarsdale, New York

CONDOLENCE CALL

After death it should be still.
No commotion and mourning feasts.

How they huddle, frightened beasts
Shuddering from contagious chill;
Shriveling women, shrunken men,
Closing ranks to feel warm again.

Thomas L. Harris
41 Charles Street
New York 14, New York

WHITE GLOVES

She is not doll-like but diminutive,
And self-contained as pauses in ballet.
Her calmness and a look of solace give
Her eyes a quietude for end of day.
A wand of light upon her face and hair
That lingers while the further colors fade
Confers nuances on her unaware,
And darkness for a moment is delayed.
She sits serenely at the meeting place
Her small hands gloved in whiteness to suggest
The innocence of lillies in a vase,
And folded lightly in a state of rest,
As if they are a moment not yet living,
But soon will be a gesture of outgiving.

Joan Stanford Bishop
Congress Street
Fairfield, Connecticut

TIME LAG

And you leave behind the strange land
where the days passed in a whisper of sun and foam
and night fell suddenly, blue, till the sand
whitened and glowed with the rising moon. Home
lies ahead over the wings of the plane.
Where is the heart so shuttled from world to world?
There is the bland insouciance it had uncurled
from its frozen sleep, started to beat again.
Will it stay there beating with the warm
wind, mind and spirit freed and flying
the Blue Mountains, the cane fields, the swarm
of white houses around the bay, lying
at peace with the body sun-drugged on rose coral?
But the body is now in flight, turned toward home.
Will the recalcitrant heart and spirit come?

Our bridged, ambivalent age evades a moral.

OOKFELLOW NOTES

Citations for merit were given by *valon News* readers to the following mmer STEP LADDER (vol. 39, no. 4) ems:

"While Looking Over", by Mary M. onovost; "Unwritten History", by abel M. Carver; "I Almost Saw nem", by Miriam Jans; and "The Flexle", by Lori Petri.

Ryah Tumarkin Goodman's "Afterought", STEP LADDER (vol. 40, no. 1) d Samuel M. Sargent's "Evening of a rm", STEP LADDER (vol. 40, no. 2) re reprinted in the New York *Herald ribune* December 9, 1956, and Janu- y 13, 1957.

Dr. David B. Steinman, internationy eminent bridge engineer who is now uilding the enormous $100,000,000 raits of Mackinac bridge, is sponsoring series of lectures on poetry at Loyola niversity in Chicago.

The series, to be conducted under the adership of the Reverend Norman T. eyand, S.J., will be held on the 13th oor of Lewis Towers, 820 North Michan Avenue, Chicago. Tickets free at ne Office of the Graduate School, same ldress, two weeks preceding each read- g. The schedule includes the follow- g poets:

E. Cummings	Jan. 16	Wednesday
llen Tate	Feb. 9	Saturday
arl Shapiro	Mar. 9	Saturday
ame Edith Sitwell	Mar. 30	Saturday
obert Frost	Apr. 11	Thursday

For an interesting article on the work Dr. Steinman, see *Reader's Digest*, ctober 1956, "Master Bridge Builder."

Dr. Steinman has most recently won wards for his poetry from *Scimitar and ong*, San Francisco Poetry Forum and The Wisconsin Poetry Foundation. His poem, "The Silent Garden" is on page 16 of this issue.

• It is with sincere regret that the editor announces the death of Albert Ralph Korn of New York City, on Sunday, November 18, 1956. Mr. Korn was a valiant friend of poets. For many years he sponsored New York State Poetry Day on October 15th, and his death is a great loss to his friends everywhere.

BOOKS RECEIVED

• *Invitation to Poetry;* a round of poems from John Skelton to Dylan Thomas, arranged with comments by Lloyd Frankenberg. Garden City, N. Y., Doubleday, 1956. ($7.75) A guided tour, a new approach to poetry, providing, via its sensitive and perceptive exploration and comment, a new awareness, deeper insight and richer delight in poetry.

• *The Gleam,* annual anthology of original verse by members of the Rochester (N. Y.) Poetry Society. President 1956-57, Miss Mary Warren, 115 Kingston Street. Thirty-sixth annual volume in this series.

• *Roots,* by Mary Boyd Wagner. The Wings Press, P. O. Box 332, Mill Valley, California. 1954. ($2.50). "Poems of a wide range, dealing engagingly with many aspects of human experience."

• *Brocade and Burlap;* a varied collection of verse, by Florence A. Dietz. New Age Publishing Company, 1542 Glendale Boulevard, Los Angeles 26. ($1.25). "Sincere, creative, exciting imagery." See page 15 of this issue for "The Strong Intangibles."

• *Poetry in Our Time,* by Babette Deutsch. N. Y. Columbia University Press, 1956. ($5.00). A comprehensive study of the form and content of twentieth-century English and American poetry, amply illustrated with quotations, including whole poems. Miss Deutsch gives a course in modern poetry at Columbia University.

• *Swan, Cygnets and Owl;* an anthology of modernist poetry in Spanish America. Translations by Mildred E. Johnson of Spanish-American poems from about 1885 to 1936. Spanish and English on facing pages. Published by the University of Missouri Studies, Columbia. ($4.00).

• *Great Americans Series,* by Monroe Heath. Six volumes now available: Statesmen, Explorers / Inventors and Scientists/Authors/Great American Women / Our Presidents / Great Events in American History. $1 each; 8½ × 11, fully illustrated; covers in color; "each subject covers a page with a particularly fine portrait and one or two outstanding incidents illustrated, and a lively, terse biographical sketch. Children will find them helpful in the study of American history; adults will find them handy for reference. Pacific Coast Publishers, 1023 Chestnut Street, Redwood City, California.

• *Driftwood Glamour,* by Antoinette Scudder. Musical, dashing poems. Limited edition, hand-set, heavy book paper available from Will Tullos, New Athenaeum Press, Lake Como, Florida.

• *Selected Poems,* by Raymond Kresensky. The Golden Quill Press, Francestown, New Hampshire, 1956. ($2.50). MacKinley Kantor said of Kresensky, his friend: " . . . several poems by Raymond Kresensky may rank with the finest lyrical verse given to our heritage in our time." This is true, and all Bookfellows, and especially Midwesterners, should read this little volume.

PERIODICALS RECEIVED

• *Yeoman,* The literary magazine of Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio. John Magnus, editor. Published December, March and May of each school year by the Associated Students of Oberlin College.

• *Morning Star;* A Quarto of Poetry, edited by John Beecher. "For a new birth of poetic freedom / Powerful and significant poems / Block print originals / Fine hand-set typography / Monumental format." First quarto now ready. $1, single issues; four issues, $3. Morning Star Press, 12542 Graton Road, Sebastopol, California.

• *The Writer;* the Pioneer Magazine for Literary Workers. The only writers' magazine indexed in the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature.* Rate, $4.00 a year. Write for sample copy and list of books dealing with technique of writing and selling fiction, non-fiction, verse, drama, etc. 8 Arlington Street, Boston 16, Massachusetts.

• *Twentieth Century Literature,* published quarterly by Alan Swallow, 2679 South York Street, Denver 10, Colorado. Subscription $3 a year. Scholarly opinion, bibliographies, checklists, annotations, criticism.

• *Wings,* a quarterly of verse. Stanton A. Coblentz, editor. P. O. Box 332, Mill Valley, California. An independent poetry magazine, owned and published by the editor. $1 a year; 35¢ an issue.

THE STEP LADDER CONTRIBUTORS FOR WINTER 1956-57

Bayka Russell	1	After Perilous Seas
Kitty Parsons	2	Winter
	2	Autumn
Antoni Gronowicz	3-6	The Girl Called Sala
Antoinette Scudder	7-9	Butterfly Blues
Mary M. Pronovost	9	Snowfall
Edward McNamee	10	Sad-Faced Clown
Helen Harrington	11	These Are the Men
Frances Angevine Gray	12-13	Stallion in the Snow
	14	Twelfth Night Song
Annie P. Thomas	15	Group Complete
Florence A. Dietz	15	The Strong Intangibles
David B. Steinman	16	The Silent Garden
Robert Wood Clack	16-17	The Wild Swans
	17	The Pink Lotus Bud
Abigail Ann Hamblen	18-21	The Vocation
Charlotte B. Wells	22-24	Beethoven and the Faun
Davina Kosh	24	Winter Rain
	24	Beyond All Tomorrows
Dorothea Webb Anderson	25	A Poet Views a City
	25	The Lost Word
Sue Abbott Boyd	26	In Lieu of Sound
	26	Beach Fire
Samuel M. Sargent	27	The City
	27	The Secret Place
Carl Larsen	28	They Say That Love Is Golden
	28	And What, My Love
Marie Coligon Busta	29	Sunless Symphony
Anne Marx	29	Condolence Call
Thomas L. Harris	30	White Gloves
Joan Stanford Bishop	30	Time Lag
Bookfellow Notes	31	

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